

STOREFRONT

Design Guidelines

- SF1** Do not remove historic materials from storefronts. Such materials as wood, cast iron, terra cotta, carrara glass, ceramic tile, and brick contribute significantly to a storefront's architectural character.
- SF2** Use historic materials where historic storefronts must be replaced in part or in whole. Cast iron, limestone, or wood are appropriate materials for storefront replacement.
- SF3** Retain all historic storefront elements, including later alterations that are historic in their own right. An example is a late nineteenth-century storefront with Art Deco features added during the 1930s.
- SF4** Respect façade alterations that have attained historic or architectural significance in their own right. Work to incorporate such elements into any new storefront design or renovation. Do not attempt to recreate a conjectural historic design if there is insufficient physical or documentary evidence.
- SF5** Do not remove later historically-significant material to restore a building to an earlier period. For example, a 1910 storefront should not be taken back to a conjectural 1850s appearance.
- SF6** Maintain the original scale, proportion, and organization of architectural elements (bulkheads, display windows, transoms, door, piers, and cornices) when renovating historic storefronts.
- SF7** Use the original form and detailing of a storefront as a model, if extensive deterioration requires complete reconstruction. The reconstruction should convey the same visual appearance and use the same material as the original. Under no circumstances should a historic storefront be removed and not replaced.
- SF8** Use historic, pictorial, and physical documentation to construct a historic storefront when the original is missing. The design may be an accurate restoration, if sufficient evidence exists, or a new design that is compatible with the size, scale, material, and color of the historic building and district.
- SF9** Keep storefront designs within their original openings. Transitions from one façade to another should be clean and clearly defined.
- SF10** Emphasize the transparent character of storefronts when implementing new designs or renovations. Generally, 60 percent of the wall surface at the sidewalk level should be transparent. Historically, merchandise seen in storefront displays was emphasized to a much greater extent than any ornament on the storefront itself.
- SF11** Do not apply reflective or insulating film to window glass.
- SF12** Do not use smoked, tinted, low-E, or reflective glass on building facades that can be seen from a public way.
- SF13** Use large sheets of clear glass when replacement of storefront display windows is required.
- SF14** Select replacement doors that reflect the storefront's original character. Doors should have large glass panels and be made of wood or painted steel or aluminum. They should not be overly-decorated or possess inappropriate historic features.
- SF15** Do not change or reorient the location of the main entrance of a storefront.
- SF16** Design awnings to complement existing architectural features. They should not overwhelm the façade.
- SF17** Install awnings made out of matte-finish weather-proofed fabric or a traditional form. Fiberglass, metal, plastic, and back-lit awnings that have contemporary shapes are inappropriate and visually intrusive.

- SF18** Select an awning color that complements the building, with solid colors and narrow or wide stripes running perpendicular to the building being the preferred patterns.
- SF19** Install awnings in a way that does not harm the building. Hardware installation should be limited to that which is required for structural stability and should be driven into mortar joints rather than into masonry.
- SF20** Attach awnings between the window display area and the signboard or second-floor window sills. Awnings should be attached below the transom line where historic prism glass is present.
- SF21** Install awnings so that the valance is no lower than 7'-6" above the sidewalk.
- SF22** Maintain the commercial character of storefronts, even if they have changed use. Blinds or insulating curtains may be added for privacy and thermal performance.
- SF23** Design replacement storefronts that are compatible with and complementary to their historic neighbors, but are recognizable as being of their own era.
- SF24** Do not add elements to storefronts that have no historic precedent. Common examples of inappropriate alterations include the installation of coach lanterns, false mansard designs, small-paned windows, and inoperable shutters.
- SF25** Do not add false fronts, false stories, or pent eaves to the roofs of commercial buildings.
- SF26** Do not use storefront design elements that are historically inappropriate, such as small-pane windows or colonial doors on late-nineteenth and twentieth-century buildings.
- SF27** Except in the Clifton Preservation District, do not use materials in storefront renovations that were not available at the time of original construction, such as vinyl or aluminum siding, stainless steel, uncoated anodized aluminum, tinted glass, or artificial stone.
- SF28** Use historic materials when replacement of bulkheads is required in part or in whole. Wood or stone panels are most appropriate.
- SF29** Do not use rough-textured wood siding or simulated masonry, such as permastone, on storefronts.
- SF30** Use historic materials when cornice replacement is required in part or in whole. Cast iron, wood, or sheet metal area appropriate materials.
- SF31** Do not install inappropriately-scaled signs that obscure or damage surviving storefront features that convey a building's architectural character.
- SF32** Include the following storefront elements when redesigning or renovating a historic storefront: large display windows and doors, transoms, relatively thin framing elements, a cornice element separating the storefront from the upper façade, low bulkheads, and tile entry flooring.
- SF33** Photographically document architectural features that are slated for reconstruction prior to the removal of any historic fabric.